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ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-17	ACDE-00	AID-01	A-01	CA-02	CCO-00
	CIAE-00	SMEC-00	CTME-00	OASY-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00	DS-00
	FBO-01	H-01	IMMC-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	LAB-01	L-01
	ADS-00	MOFM-04	MOF-03	M-00	NEA-01	NSAE-00	NSCE-00
	OCS-06	OMB-01	OPR-01	PA-01	PM-00	PRS-01	P-01
	SCT-03	SNP-00	SP-00	SR-00	SS-00	TRSE-00	T-00
	USIE-00	USSS-00	SA-01	ASDS-01	PMB-00	DSCC-00	DRL-09
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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1430
INFO AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM//SCCC//
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CARACAS

RELEASED IN FULL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BUENOS AIRES 005279

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PGOV, PREL, AR
SUBJECT: AMIA BOMBING: JUDGE IDENTIFIES IRANIAN
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- SUSPECTS, DIPLOMATS ALL

1. (U) JUAN JOSE GALEANO, THE FEDERAL JUDGE INVESTIGATING THE JULY 18 BOMBING OF ARGENTINA'S JEWISH MUTUAL ASSOCIATION (AMIA), HAS IDENTIFIED SEVEN IRANIANS WHOM HE BELIEVES MAY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE ATTACK. GALEANO HAS ISSUED ARREST WARRANTS FOR FOUR IRANIAN DIPLOMATS FORMERLY ASSIGNED TO ARGENTINA AND CITED THREE CURRENTLY ACCREDITED IRANIAN DIPLOMATS AS SUSPECTS. ALL FOUR OF THOSE ORDERED ARRESTED ARE BELIEVED TO BE OUTSIDE ARGENTINA, AND NONE APPEARS TO

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HAVE BEEN IN THE COUNTRY AT THE TIME OF THE BOMBING.

2. (U) THE FOUR ORDERED ARRESTED ARE:

-- ABBAS ZARRABI KHORASANI: A FIRST SECRETARY AT THE IRANIAN EMBASSY FROM NOVEMBER 7, 1987 UNTIL JUNE 29, 1993.

-- MAHVASH MONSEF GHOLAMREZA: ARRIVED IN BUENOS AIRES FROM TEHERAN OF JANUARY 21, 1988 ACCREDITED AS AN ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEE OF THE EMBASSY. HOWEVER, BECAUSE THERE IS NO PROCEDURE TO NOTIFY ARGENTINE AUTHORITIES WHEN AN ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEE LEAVES HIS POSITION, IT IS UNKNOWN IF HE IS STILL IN ARGENTINA.

-- AKBAR PARVARESH: GRANTED A DIPLOMATIC VISA BY ARGENTINE AUTHORITIES ON NOVEMBER 18, 1993 WITH PERMISSION TO REMAIN IN THE COUNTRY FOR SEVEN DAYS. KNOWN AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ISLAMIC PARLIAMENT OF IRAN, HIS STATED INTENTION WAS TO TRAVEL TO ARGENTINA

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ON AN OFFICIAL MISSION. HIS ARGENTINE VISA REMAINS
VALID UNTIL 1995.

-- AHMED ALLAMEH FASAFI: ENTERED ARGENTINA ON JANUARY 24, 1992, AND SERVED AS THIRD SECRETARY IN THE IRANIAN EMBASSY IN BUENOS AIRES FOR TWO MONTHS THAT YEAR, FROM JULY 24 TO SEPTEMBER 24. IT IS UNKNOWN IF HE WAS IN THE COUNTRY AT ANY OTHER TIME.

3. (U) IN ADDITION, GALEANO NAMED THREE IRANIAN DIPLOMATS CURRENTLY SERVING IN BUENOS AIRES AS SUSPECTS IN THE CASE. THEY ARE:

-- AHMAD REZA ASHGARI: A THIRD SECRETARY AT THE IRANIAN EMBASSY ACCREDITED JULY 11, 1991. HE IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN IN BUENOS AIRES ON JULY 18, THE DAY OF THE ATTACK.

-- ZANGENEH GHOLAMREZA: A SECOND SECRETARY ASSIGNED TO THE COMMERCIAL SECTION. ACCREDITED IN ARGENTINA SINCE MARCH 17, 1993.

-- MOHSEN RABBINI: A SPIRITUAL LEADER OF THE SHIITE COMMUNITY IN THE SOUTHERN CONE WHO HAS LIVED IN

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ARGENTINA SINCE 1983. HE WAS ONLY ACCREDITED AS CULTURAL COUNSELOR AT THE EMBASSY OF IRAN ON MARCH 30, 1994, A FACT GALEANO CITED AS SUSPICIOUS. RABBINI HAS ADMITTED THAT IN LATE 1993 HE SHOPPED FOR A VAN OF THE

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SAME TYPE AS THAT USED IN THE AMIA BOMBING, ACCORDING
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TO PRESS REPORTS.

4. (U) JUDGE GALEANO ALSO ORDERED CHARGES BROUGHT AGAINST THREE ARGENTINES. CARLOS ALBERTO TELLELDIN, WAS ORDERED HELD IN CUSTODY ON CHARGES OF CONCEALMENT AND FALSIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS. TELLELDIN HAD SOLD THE VAN ALLEGEDLY USED IN THE BOMBING. TWO MECHANICS WHO WORKED ON THE CAR WERE ALSO INDICTED FOR ILLEGALLY REPLACING ITS MOTOR. THE JUDGE ALLOWED THE MECHANICS TO REMAIN OUT OF CUSTODY.

5. (U) JUDGE GALEANO INDICATED THAT HE BASED HIS BELIEF THAT THE IRANIANS WERE INVOLVED ON TESTIMONY HE OBTAINED IN CARACAS FROM FORMER IRANIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL MONZAR MOATAMER. HE DID NOT CITE ANY CORROBORATING EVIDENCE. THE ARGENTINE PRESS HAS CALLED MOATAMER A U.S. "DOUBLE AGENT."

6. (U) UNDER ARGENTINE LAW, IF CHARGES ARE FILED AGAINST A FOREIGN DIPLOMAT THE CASE IS AUTOMATICALLY UNDER THE EXCLUSIVE JURISDICTION OF THE SUPREME COURT. IN THIS CASE, JUDGE GALEANO HAS NOT YET FILED ANY CHARGES AGAINST A CURRENTLY ACCREDITED DIPLOMAT. HOWEV
ER, HE SENT HIS RULING TO THE SUPREME COURT AND

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- SUSPECTS, DIPLOMATS ALL

ASKED THE COURT TO DECIDE IF THEY WISHED TO ASSERT
JURISDICTION BECAUSE OF THE POSSIBLE INVOLVEMENT OF
DIPLOMATS.

7. (U) MEANWHILE, FOREIGN MINISTER GUIDO DI TELLA
TOLD JOURNALISTS ON AUGUST 9 THAT THE ARGENTINE
GOVERNMENT IS NOT FULLY CONVINCED OF THE INVOLVEMENT

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OF IRANIAN DIPLOMATS IN THE AMIA BOMBING. DI TELLA SAID THAT IN THE HYPOTHETICAL CASE THAT SUCH PROOF EXISTED, "ALL THAT ARGENTINA WILL DO IS TO ASK THEM TO BE WITHDRAWN ... BUT THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT WE WILL BREAK RELATIONS," THE PRESS REPORTED. DI TELLA REPORTEDLY STATED THAT THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT ACT UNDER PRESSURE OF PUBLIC OPINION AND WITHOUT ANALYZING THE CONSEQUENCES OF ILL-CONSIDERED MEASURES.

8. (U) THE PRESS CONTRASTED DI TELLA'S CAUTIOUS APPROACH WITH DEFENSE MINISTER OSCAR CAMILION'S SLIGHTLY HARDER LINE. CAMILION PREDICTED THAT IT WAS INEVITABLE THAT THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT WOULD DECLARE

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IRANIAN DIPLOMATS PERSONA NON GRATA. HE REPORTEDLY SAID THAT LEGALLY SUFFICIENT PROOF WOULD NOT BE REQUIRED FOR THIS ACTION, THAT "CLEAR INDICATIONS" OF IRANIAN OFFICIALS' INVOLVEMENT WOULD BE SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE FOR THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT TO EXPEL THE
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DIPLOMATS.

COMMENT

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9. (C) THERE IS TREMENDOUS POLITICAL PRESSURE ON THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT TO ARREST THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BOMBING. MANY ARGENTINES BELIEVE THAT THE FAILURE TO SOLVE THE 1992 BOMBING OF ISRAEL'S BUENOS AIRES EMBASSY DEMONSTRATED TO INTERNATIONAL TERRORISTS THAT ARGENTINA WAS A SOFT TARGET. THE PUBLIC BELIEVES THAT IRAN WAS BEHIND THE AMIA BOMBING OR SUPPORTED THE PERPETRATORS IN SOME WAY.

10. (C) YET HARD EVIDENCE OF THE "IRANIAN CONNECTION" IS SLIM. AT THIS TIME, GALEANO PROBABLY LACKS EVIDENCE THAT WILL "STAND UP IN COURT." IN ARGENTINA'S INVESTIGATIVE SYSTEM OF JUSTICE JUDGES HAND DOWN INDICTMENTS EARLIER THAN GRAND JURIES DO IN A U.S. FEDERAL COURT. THEY ARE OFTEN INTENDED AS A TOOL TO FURTHER AN INVESTIGATION. HIS AUGUST 9

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ANNOUNCEMENT APPEARS BASED ON THE STATEMENTS OF FORMER IRANIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL MONZAR MOATAMER, A WITNESS WHOSE KNOWLEDGE AND RELIABILITY REGARDING THE EVENTS IN THIS CASE ARE QUESTIONABLE.

11. (C) FOREIGN MINISTER DI TELLA'S RELUCTANCE TO BREAK RELATIONS WITH IRAN IS A STEP BACK FROM EARLIER STATEMENTS ABOUT TAKING A HARD LINE WITH TEHERAN. HIS STANCE MAY REFLECT NOT ONLY DOUBTS REGARDING THE

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CONCLUSIVENESS OF GALEANO'S EVIDENCE AT THIS STAGE OF THE PROCEEDINGS BUT ALSO CONCERNS ABOUT ARGENTINA'S ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN IRAN. ANOTHER, AND MORE EMOTIONAL ISSUE IN A COUNTRY SHAKEN BY TWO UNSOLVED TERRORIST BOMBINGS IN TWO YEARS, IS THE UNSPOKEN FEAR THAT CHALLENGING IRAN MIGHT LEAD TO OTHER ATTACKS IN BUENOS AIRES.

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